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NSC STAFF FOR PASCUAL

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TAGS: [PHUM KIRF](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER KISL](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT'S MFA ON APRIL 6 DETAINEES, BAHA'IS, CT LAW

REF: A. CAIRO 730
[B](#). CAIRO 157
[C](#). CAIRO 699
[D](#). CAIRO 244
[E](#). CAIRO 534

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs
William R. Stewart for Reasons 1.4(B).

1.(SBU) We met on April 22 with Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Assistant Minister for Human Rights, Wael Aboulmagd, to discuss the detention of organizers of the April 6 general strike, the issuance of national identification cards to members of Egypt's Baha'i religious community, the status of the counter-terrorism law, and the killing of African migrants by Egyptian border security forces (reported septel).

Detention of April 6 Strike Organizers

2.(C) We expressed our concern about the continued detention of activists involved in organizing the April 6 general strike and, specifically, Israa Abdul Fattah, the opposition El Ghad party member who used the Facebook social networking site to publicize the strike (ref A). Israa was arrested on April 6, ordered released by the Public Prosecutor on April 14, and immediately re-arrested by the Ministry of Interior. She is currently in custody, and reportedly subject to an indefinite detention order under authority of Egypt's Emergency law. Abulmagd said the MFA had had no control over these detentions, but added that he had sent inquiries to the MoI and Public Prosecutor and hoped to receive more information. Aboulmagd said he would "note" our concern.

Religious Minority ID Update

3.(C) We next discussed the Baha,i identification document case. On January 24, an Egyptian court ordered the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to issue national identification documents to three members of Egypt's small Baha'i religious community, a ruling the government chose not to appeal (refs B and C). We noted that while the court's ruling was significant, we were concerned that it had not yet been implemented. Aboulmagd replied by emphasizing the MFA's role in convincing the government not to appeal the decision, something he described as "unprecedented." On implementation, he said that it was simply a matter of time as the "bureaucracy reacts". He said the more significant issue is the implication for other Baha'is, and Aboulmagd said he expects the decision to eventually be applied broadly to all Baha'is.

4.(C) We also asked about a implementation of a February 10 court decision directing the MoI to issue identification documents to twelve reconverts to Christianity and expressed concern that the decision, which is not subject to appeal, had not been implemented (ref D). Aboulmagd seemed less familiar with the case and said he would get back to us.

Counter-Terrorism Law

5.(C) We concluded by asking Aboulmagd about the status of the draft counter-terrorism law, currently scheduled to take effect upon the expiration of the Emergency Law on May 31 (ref E). Aboulmagd said that the draft law is still with the interagency drafting committee, and would need to be reviewed and approved by the State Council before being presented to Egypt's Parliament. He said that because the law will be controversial, he does not envision Parliament passing it without a lengthy debate, making it unlikely that the law will be approved by May 31. Aboulmagd suggested that the Emergency Law will be extended, at least for a period of months, pending final approval of the counter-terrorism law.

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